

# Editorial

This edition of *Buried History* has proven to be rather sombre. It begins with tributes to four friends of the Institute, the first two of whom were members of this journal's Editorial Board. The papers deal with deception in archaeology and a shipwreck, while the reviews are of three books, one that discusses issues faced by Israeli archaeology, such as the *nakba*, another dealing with plague in antiquity, and a third about Cyprus and Ugarit.

Professor Ken Kitchen's memorial draws heavily on his autobiography, to which many people will not have ready access. It is often quite charming and displays, in retrospect at least, Ken's light-hearted approach to the many challenges that he faced. His capacity to fund his research by combining tour-guiding with the recording of Ramesside inscriptions onsite, illustrates his creative approach to life. Ken was one of the great Egyptologist of our time and leaves a significant legacy of published work for both scholars and a general readership.

The passing of Professor Thomas Davis has saddened his friends because it seemed so untimely; no-one was ready. The tribute was prepared in the light of the many memories that accumulated while excavating with him in Cyprus. I will miss the discussions of faith and archaeology over a frappe at the Chris Blue Beach Taverner, Episkopi, Cyprus. Tom's colleagues are now left with the responsibility of publishing the archaeological work that we all started together in 2012.

In Melbourne, there are many fond memories of Professor Takamitsu Muraoka. Like Ken Kitchen, he had an extraordinary capacity for languages, ancient and modern, and a work commitment that resulted in a prodigious bibliography. We are indebted to Dr Martin Baasten of Leiden University for writing the *memoriam* and to Ellie Muraoka for the feature photograph. In his retirement, Professor Muraoka devoted his attention to New Testament and Septuagint Greek, a language that he was never called upon to teach, and to spend five weeks per year with his wife, Keiko, teaching what he called 'Applied Biblical Philology' in Asian countries that had 'suffered under the Japanese imperialism and militarism in the first half of the twentieth century' (T. Muraoka, *My Via Dolorosa*, AuthorHouse, 2016, p. ix).

Sally Salter was another larger-than-life person who did not let the grass grow under her feet. She came to archaeology and ancient world studies later in life and enthusiastically engaged with it. The degree courses at the University of Melbourne in these subjects, often taken by mature age students such as Sally, have been a successful model for teaching the humanities.

The first paper by Associate Professor Phillip Edwards of La Trobe University is developed from his Petrie Oration of 2025. Phillip's primary research involves the origins of sedentism and village life, and his fieldwork is in the East Jordan Valley at the Natufian site of Wadi

Hammeh 27 (12,000–12,500 BCE) and the Pre-Pottery Neolithic site of Zahrat adh-Dhra' 2 (9,200–8,300 BCE). This article of Phillip's addresses another research interest of his, the history of archaeology, and is part of an academic biographical project studying the career of James Mellaart.

My paper on St Paul's voyage to Rome and the shipwreck he experienced combines research into Roman merchant shipping and the narrative of the New Testament. The paper draws attention to several new aspects of the saga including: a few crucial technical terms normally mistranslated and misunderstood, the professional seamanship of the sailors, Luke's allusions to the *Odyssey*, and the pertinence of this story as the climax of the Book of the Acts. While many commentators have questioned the veracity of the narrative, it is in fact lucid and logical.

The changing circumstances in the Middle East and Israel are ever before us, but the implications for specific activities, such as archaeology, are rarely apparent. Steven Rosen reviews Hayah Katz's discussion of the recent transformations in Israeli archaeology, and the roles that the various socio-religious groups in Israel are fulfilling. This is much more nuanced than anything one may encounter in Western media reports. Steven is an archaeologist who studies the prehistory and protohistory of the Levant, with a specific focus on the Negev. He investigates the archaeology of mobile pastoral societies, examining how human populations adapted to harsh desert environments over millennia. Much of his professional life has therefore been associated with Israeli archaeology. We are grateful for his extended review.

The volume on *Plague in Antiquity* that I review is interesting. The awareness of the subject has flourished recently with scientific analyses using ancient DNA to identify the bacteria present at the time of death. Our knowledge of plague will be transformed over the next decade with such techniques. *Plague in Antiquity* provides a good starting point for the subject.

We are pleased that Professor Caroline Sauvage has interrupted her busy schedule to review Bernard Knapp's book *Cyprus and Ugarit*. She is professor of archaeology in the Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts, NEH chair of Mediterranean Studies, and the Director of the LMU Archaeology Center. She has an MA and PhD from the Université Lumière Lyon 2 in France and is an expert on Ras Shamra.

As always, we acknowledge the referees and reviewers who have been generous with their time and advice.

Christopher J. Davey

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